REMARKS

The application has been amended and is believed to be in condition for allowance.

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation that claims 1-6 have been allowed and that claim 13 is directed to allowable subject matter (apart from formal matters).

Claim 13 has been amended to be in independent form including the recitations of claims 10 and 12. Allowance of claim 13 is solicited.

Claim 10 is objected in view of the schematic composition of the invention illustrated by Figure 1. See, however, that the embodiments of Figures 4 and 6 show the internal cell receiving section with first and second output ports as recited. Therefore the recitation is believed proper. Withdrawal of the objection is solicited.

Claims 7-13 are rejected under §112, second paragraph. Withdrawal of the indefiniteness rejection is solicited.

Claim 7 has been amended to recite "an internal cell generating section that accepts an original user data in a ~~switching~~ format of ~~at least~~ either one of an Internet protocol ~~cell~~ packet and an asynchronous transfer mode cell and generates, from user data destination information within the accepted original user data, an internal cell comprising said original user data and output index information indexing the user data

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destination information to at least one of the plural data output ports." The claim has been amended to make clear that the invention accepts either of an IP packet and an ATM cell. Claim 10 has been similarly amended.

As to the recitation of "indexing the user data destination information…", as an initial matter, the output index information in a header field 41 of an internal cell 40 of the invention is converted from a destination information in a header field of the IP packet or the ATM cell. See Figure 3.

It is true that an index search section 12 conducts an indexing search in the output port conversion table 13 (specification page 4, lines 9-14). See below that the header field 41 is used in this indexing search, where the output index information in header field 41 is used to index (map) that output index information to specific output ports by reference to table 13. See Figure 5 and Figure 7. Figure 7 uses the "output index information" phase.

See that table 13 stores multiple index information and multiple output port number information in a one-to-one basis for unicast and one-to-multiple basis for multicast for indexing the output index information from the header field 41 (left edge of the table shown in Figure 5) to specific output port numbers (top edge of the table shown in Figure 5).

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See that the results from the referral to the table 13 is input to destination based distribution section 16, section 16 controlling the gate selection block 15 (lines 17-18).

With reference to the paragraph spanning pages 4-5 of the specification, together with Figure 3, see that the internal cell 40 comprises a header field 41 and a data field 42. See the disclosure that the header field 41 stores destination information (e.g., VPI/VCI identification) converted for switching inside the unit, i.e., to the recited output index information.

The header field 41 (comprising the output index information, e.g., 001_H-FFF_H) is sent to the search section 12 while the entire cell 40 is sent to the timing generating section 14. The index search section receives output port number(s) from the table 13 (step 16 and shown in Figure 5). This indexes the internal cell to one of the output ports in the case of unicast and to plural of the output ports in the case of multicast.

See page 6, lines 18-27 (where memory 13B corresponds to table 13 of Figure 1) disclosing "the output index information to be extracted [from the header field 41] by a memory reading control circuit 12B to function as the index search section 12 corresponds to an address of the memory 13B, and the output port number corresponds to data to be written in each address of the

memory 13B. … The output port number is stored in the form of bit pattern so as to facilitate the control of the gate section 15B."

See the first two full paragraphs on page 7 detailing the memory reading control circuit reading the header field of the internal cell to extract the output index information from the header field and then conduct the read operation of memory 13B to obtain specific output port values.

There is similar discussion concerning the second embodiment of Figures 6-7.

In view of the above, it is believed to be accurate to say that the output index information **indexes** the user data destination information to data output ports by being used to search/extract the output port conversion table/memory. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the indefiniteness rejection are solicited.

Claims 7-12 stand rejected as anticipated by SMITH 6,349,097.

The internal cell generating section, of the present invention, is recited as accepting an original user data and, from the user data destination information, there is generated a new internal cell comprising the original user data and ***an output index information* indexing the user data destination information to the plural data output ports**. A single output port would be the case of a unicast transmission, whereas plural output ports

would be for the case of multicast. SMITH is not seen as generating such an internal cell which creates a new cell comprising the original user data cell and the output index information, where the output index information indexes user data destination information from the accepted original user data and the indexing is to at least one of the plural data output ports.

Further, SMITH is not seen as having an output port conversion table of the type recited in independent claim 7. That is, a conversion table that stores an indexing relationship between the output index information and the actual output port numbers; that is, in the form of one index value corresponding to one output port for unicast and one index value corresponding to plural output ports for multicast.

As to claim 10, the recitations concerning the internal cell generating section are believed patentable for the same reasons as to claim 7.
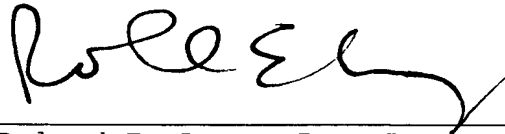
In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of all the pending claims are respectfully requested.

Please charge the fee of $86 for the one extra independent claim added herewith to Deposit Account No. 25-0120.

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The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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